Providing good pay perks for doctors

†586. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Government doctors available with Centre and State Governments for treatment in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that due to lack of adequate salary and proper facilities, most of the doctors are leaving Government institutes and joining private institutes and big private hospitals; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to stop this practice?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) As per information available, there are a total 4745 posts sanctioned in the Central Health Service, out of which 3491 posts were filled up as on 1.1.2007. In respect of State Governments, as per the National Health Policy profile 2006 brought out by the Central Health Intelligence, there are 73549 allopathic doctors. Additionally, under NRHM there are 3673 doctors and 3163 specialists are working on contractual basis as on 1.6.2007.

(b) and (c) The Central Government had noted the increasing trend of Government doctors especially the Specialist seeking Voluntary Retirement or Resigning due to the attractive financial compensation and other generous service benefits in foreign assignments/domestic private sector. The Government had constituted and Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Javid Choudhury, Former Secretary (Health) to suggest measures/ disincentives that should be introduced to arrest the outflow of doctors and changes in the terms and condition of service. The Committee has made a number of recommendations to improve the lot of these doctors. Amongst the steps taken by Government (i) the age of retirement of specialists in three sub-cadres of Teaching, Non-teaching and Public Health has already been increased from 60 to 62 years (ii) the period of study leave has also been increased from two years to three years in respect of CHS doctors.

Food Safety Act 2006

587. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has reportedly pulled up Centre for not notifying the Food Safety Act, 2006, and failing to implement it despite the Presidential assent given a year ago;

(b) if so, what steps Government has taken, so far, to check adulteration of food and beverages involving health of young children who are being misled by advertisement of soft drinks; and

(c) by when, Government propose to notify and order for disclosing composition and contents of the products and additives on the bottle, package or container, as required?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) The setting up of Food Safety and Standards Authority and implementation of the Act involves significant inter-ministerial coordination. A steering group under the Chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary, including the Secretaries of all relevant Ministries

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

has been constituted for overseeing the setting up of an autonomous Food Safety and Standards Authority on the basis of the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSA), 2006. Sections 4 to 10 (both inclusive), sections 87, 88, 91 and 101 of the FFSA, 2006 have been notified with effect from 15th October, 2007. The notification of these sections will enable the setting up of the Food Authority which would take up further steps for implementation of the Act.

(b) Under PFA Rules, 1955 the standards for food and beverages have been prescribed. There is no provision under the PFA Rules, 1955 to regulate advertisements as such. However, Rule 43-A of the PFA Rules 1955, provides that there shall be no advertisement of any food which is misleading or contravening the provisions of PFA Act 1954 or the Rules made there under.

The PFA Act, 1954 and Rules made there under are implemented by the State/UT Governments. For keeping a check on adulteration, they draw samples of various food products and take appropriate action under PFA rules, 1955.

(c) The final notification regarding regulations for labeling and disclosing the ingredients of the contents of products was issued *vide* GSR 491(E) dated 21.8.2006 (to come into effect on 20.8.2007). Some representations were received from manufacturing associations, trade bodies and individual industries pointing out practical difficulties in implementing the amended provisions. These difficulties were discussed with the industry and these provisions have been deferred till 20.2.2008. However, an expert group labeling and disclosing of ingredients, including representatives of industry and consumer organizations, constituted by the Ministry has deliberated over the issue and has submitted its recommendations. The Ministry has initiated the process of issuing the amended notification.

Medical colleges

588. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of registered medical colleges at present in the country;

(b) the increase expected in the number of these medical colleges in the next two years in the country;

(c) whether any plan in this regard has been formulated by Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (d) Presently, there are 271 Medical Colleges in the country. Out of which, one 138 are in Government sector and 133 are in private sector. Out of 271, 192 are recognized Medical Colleges and opening of 79 Medical Colleges have been permitted by Central Government.

Permission for establishment of Medical Colleges and admission of students is granted by Central Government as per the provisions of IMC Act, 1956 and Establishment of Medical College Regulations, 1999. During the last two years, 29 new Medical Colleges have been established in the country. The increase in number of Medical Colleges in the next two years depends upon the number of applications received, evaulated by MCI and finally approved by Central Government.